

CLAIMS:

1. A health-care system comprising:
a processing machine;
a plurality of biosensors respectively associated with individuals, each of the biosensors being operable to gather information regarding physiological parameters of the respective individuals and relay the information to the processing machine over a network; and
data links from the processing machine to respective providers of a plurality of different health-care services to allow the transmission of instructions over the network for appropriate action to be taken in response to a determination that an individual is likely to suffer from a medical condition.
2. A system according to Claim 1, further comprising a first terminal connected to the processing machine and operable to present information received from one or more of the biosensors to allow the determination of whether the individual associated with the one or more biosensors is likely to suffer from a medical condition.
3. A system according to Claim 1, wherein at least some of the data links comprise links over the network.
4. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the network is the Internet.
5. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the network comprises a wireless network.
6. A system according Claim 1, wherein the processing machine is operable to transmit instructions to at least one health-care service in response

to the receipt of information indicating that at least one of the physical parameters of an individual with which one of the biosensors is associated is outside predetermined limits.

7. A system according to Claim 1, further comprising a delivery device operable to administer automatically a dose of a substance to an individual.

8. A system according to Claim 7, wherein the delivery device is controllable by the processing machine.

9. A system according to Claim 1, further comprising a location tracking device associated with one of the individuals, to track the location of the individual.

10. A system according to Claim 9, wherein instructions transmitted over the network to a health-care service include the location of an individual.

11. A system according to Claim 1, further comprising a database storing medical records of at least some of the individuals.

12. A system according to Claim 11, wherein the processing machine is operable to update the database following the receipt of information from one of the biosensors.

13. A system according to Claim 12, wherein the processing machine is operable to present at least some of the records relating to an individual along with data received from a biosensor relating to that individual.

14. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the processing machine is operable to allow real-time consultation over the network between one of the individuals and a health-care expert.
15. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the processing machine is operable to allow at least one further party to join the real-time consultation.
16. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the real-time consultation comprises video conferencing.
17. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the individuals are selected from the group comprising: health-care users, out-patients, in-patients and intensive care patients.
18. A system according to Claim 1, further comprising a personal data storage unit associated with one of the individuals.
19. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the personal data storage unit is operable to receive and store data from a biosensor.
20. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the personal data unit is used to identify an individual to a biosensor before the biosensor gathers the information from the individual.
21. A system according to Claim 20, wherein the plurality of biosensors are operable to gather information on selected physiological parameters in dependence upon the identity of an individual.

22. A system according to Claim 18, wherein medical records relating to the individual are stored on the personal data storage unit.

23. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the personal data storage unit allows access to a database on which medical records relating to the individual are stored.

24. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the personal data storage unit is programmed to allow access to selected portions of medical records of the individual to selected entities.

25. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the personal data storage unit is operable to connect to the network by a wireless connection or by a contact connection.

26. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the personal data storage unit comprises a smart card.

27. A system according to Claim 18, further comprising a portable processing device, wherein the personal data storage unit is operable to transfer data stored therein to the portable processing device.

28. A system according to Claim 27, wherein the portable processing device is operable to analyse data received from the personal data storage unit to determine whether at least one of the physical parameters of an individual with which one of the biosensors is associated is outside predetermined limits.

29. A system according to Claim 24, wherein the access of the selected entities to the selected portions of the records expires after a predetermined period.

30. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the health-care services are selected from the group comprising: a pharmacy, a physician, an emergency service; a medical hardware supplier; a nutritionist; a source of health-care information; a health-care related government body; a nursing care centre; a research facility; a health insurance broker; and a financial institution.

31. A system according to Claim 1, wherein one of the health-care services comprise a source of medical records having features selected from the group comprising bio-data, health-care records, a health-care calendar, and a financial calendar.

32. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the processing machine is operable to transmit information regarding a condition that an individual has or is likely to develop to the individual.

33. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the information is relayed to the processing machine over the network in an encrypted form, the encryption being specific to the individual to whom the information relates.

34. A system according to Claim 1, wherein an individual has an identification number and the gathered information for the individual is encrypted with the identification number into a data packet for decryption by the processing machine.

35. A system according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of the biosensors comprises a microarray.

36. A system according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of the biosensors is operable to obtain a DNA sample from an individual.

37. A method of monitoring the health of a plurality of individuals, the method comprising the steps of:

equipping a plurality of individuals with biosensors;
gathering information regarding physiological parameters of the respective individuals using the biosensors;
relaying the information to a processing machine over a network; and
providing data links to respective providers of a plurality of different health-care services to allow the transmission of instructions over the network for appropriate action to be taken in response to a determination that an individual is likely to suffer from a medical condition.

38. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of presenting the information received from one or more of the biosensors to allow the determination of whether the individual associated with the one or more biosensors is likely to suffer from a medical condition.

39. A method according to Claim 37, wherein at least some of the data links comprise links over the network.

40. A method according to Claim 37, wherein the network is the Internet.

41. A method according to Claim 37, wherein the network comprises a wireless network.

42. A method according Claim 35, further comprising the step of transmitting instructions to at least one health-care service in response to the receipt of information indicating that at least one of the physical parameters of an individual with which one of the biosensors is associated is outside predetermined limits.

43. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of providing a delivery device operable to administer automatically a dose of a substance to an individual.

44. A method according to Claim 43, wherein the delivery device is controllable by the processing machine.

45. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of tracking the location of one of the individuals using a location tracking device associated with the individual.

46. A method according to Claim 45, wherein the step of transmitting instructions over the network to a health-care service includes the step of providing the location of an individual.

47. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of storing medical records of at least some of the individuals.

48. A method according to Claim 47, wherein the processing machine is operable to update the medical records following the receipt of information from one of the biosensors.

49. A method according to Claim 48, further comprising the step of presenting at least some of the records relating to an individual along with the presentation of data received from a biosensor relating to that individual.

50. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of allowing real-time consultation over the network between one of the individuals and a health-care expert.

51. A method according to Claim 50, further comprising the step of allowing at least one further party to join the real-time consultation.

52. A method according to Claim 50, wherein the step of allowing real-time consultation comprises the step of allowing video conferencing.

53. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of selecting the individuals from the group comprising: health-care users, out-patients, in-patients and intensive care patients.

54. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of providing one of the individuals with a personal data storage unit.

55. A method according to Claim 37, wherein the personal data storage unit is operable to receive and store data from a biosensor.

56. A method according to Claim 54, further comprising the step of identifying the individual to a biosensor, from information stored on the personal data storage unit, before the biosensor gathers the information from the individual.

57. A method according to Claim 56, wherein the method comprises the step of gathering information on selected physiological parameters determined by the identity of an individual.

58. A method according to Claim 54, wherein medical records relating to the individual are stored on the personal data storage unit.

59. A method according to Claim 54, wherein the personal data storage unit allows access to a database on which medical records relating to the individual are stored.

60. A method according to Claim 54, further comprising the step of programming the personal data storage unit to allow access to selected portions of medical records of the individual to selected entities.

61. A method according to Claim 37, wherein the personal data storage unit is operable to connect to the network by a wireless connection or by a contact connection.

62. A method according to Claim 54, wherein the personal data storage unit comprises a smart card.

63. A method according to Claim 31, further comprising the step of providing a portable processing device, the personal data storage unit being operable to transfer data stored therein to the portable processing device.

64. A method according to Claim 63, wherein the portable processing device is operable to analyse data received from the personal data storage unit to determine whether at least one of the physical parameters of an individual with which one of the biosensors is associated is outside predetermined limits.

65. A method according to Claim 60, wherein the access of the selected entities to the selected portions of the records expires after a predetermined period.

66. A method according to Claim 37, wherein the health-care services are selected from the group comprising: a pharmacy, a physician, an emergency service; a medical hardware supplier; a nutritionist; a source of health-care information; a health-care related government body; a nursing care centre; a research facility; a health insurance broker; and a financial institution.

67. A method according to Claim 37, wherein one of the health-care services comprises a source of medical records having features selected from the group comprising bio-data, healthcare-records, a health-care calendar, and a financial calendar.

68. A method according to Claim 37, further comprising the step of transmitting information regarding a condition that an individual has or is likely to develop to the individual.

69. A method according to Claim 37, wherein the information is relayed to the processing machine over the network in an encrypted form, the encryption being specific to the individual to whom the information relates.

70. A method according to Claim 37, wherein each individual has an identification number and the gathered information for the individual is encrypted with the identification number into a data packet for decryption by the processing machine.

71. A method according to Claim 37, wherein at least one of the biosensors comprises a microarray.

72. A method according to Claim 37, wherein at least one of the biosensors is operable to obtain a DNA sample from an individual.